American Women at the Queen's Reception.

Dress Worn by Mrs. W. J. Ritchie.

PRESENTED AT COURT.

A Graphic Account of the Ceremony.

AMERICAN WOMEN JUST PRESENTED.

Trains Fifteen Feet Long and Decollete Gowns in the Daylight—A Glimpse of the Great.

An English girl of social position really makes her entry into the world when she is first presented to the Queen. It will, therefore, be at once understood of what importance is this event in her life. But it is not generally known that there is a large class of American society in which the women look forward to the same event with only a little less eagerness than their English sisters. They expect to be "presented at court," as a matter of course, and speak of the ceremony as if it had nothing to do with a foreign country.

For social purposes, at least, rich American women are thorough-going supporters of monarchy. The number who would miss a chance to be presented at court is very small. Probably the Americans enjoy the presentation ceremony more thoroughly than the English, for it means pure amusement to them, unalloyed with awe. Whatever their appreciation of royalty, it could in few cases be classed as reverence.

The ceremony at which a woman is presented to the Queen or her representative is technically known as a drawing room. About three drawing rooms take place in the earlier part of the year. The first of them has just taken place—on March 11—and it was at this that the American women whose dresses are depicted here were presented. The Princess of Wales held this drawing room on behalf of the Queen, who has avoided all public exertion since the death of Prince Henry of Battenberg.

One of these Americans was Mrs. W. J. Ritchie, of California, formerly Miss Roach, of Cincinnati. She wore a superb gown of very pale blue satin, with a court train fifteen feet long, of white brocade, lined with pink satin. Her bouquet was of white azaleas, lilacs and roses. Her ornaments were diamonds and turquoises.

Miss Curtis, of Boston, a cousin of Lady Playfair, who is also an American, wore a pale green brocade, with a pink satin train trimmed with ostrich feathers. She carried a bouquet of pink roses.

Miss Clara Curtis, a debutante, wore white satin, with a white striped brocade train and carried a bouquet of white violets and lilies of the valley.

The Americans were presented by Mrs. Thomas F. Bayard, wife of the United States Ambassador, who afterward held a reception at her own residence. The number of Americans presented was small, for various reasons, but chiefly because this is not a time of the year when they go to London.

It will now be interesting to tell the process by which a young woman reaches the brief and awful climax of a drawing room. Every woman belonging to the family of a gentleman of independent estate or a member of one of the professions has a theoretical right to be presented. As a matter of fact, no well-to-do ambitious woman has much difficulty in accomplishing the feat, even though her husband be in butter.

The Lord Chamberlain has charge of all matters pertaining to presentations. He receives applications and makes up the list. The number of general presentations is now limited to about two hundred. Persons of no influence may have to defer their happiness for a year or so.

This functionary not only makes up the list of presentations, but regulates to a great extent the manner in which the women shall be dressed. Both these duties he performs, of course, under instructions from the Queen. His regulations require that the train shall be not less than a certain length, which was recently twelve feet, and that the corsage shall be cut low in the neck. Before the recent drawing room he intimated that all but debutantes would be expected to show some sign of mourning in their dress, owing to the death of Prince Henry of Battenburg.

Every woman is presented by another who has already been presented. A mother often performs this service for her daughter. When the Lord Chamberlain puts their names on his list he sends them big cards, one of which has to be presented at the gates of the palace and another to one of the Chamberlain's subordinates before entering the throne room.

The cards received, a debutante proceeds to order the most magnificent dress her father can afford, or cannot. In addition to the enormous train, she wears a long white veil pinned to her hair and carries an immense bouquet. To handle the train and the bouquet she must rehearse frequently, and even then she may come to grief. She also gets photographed and may get her dress into the illustrated papers.

A woman is presented not only as a debutante, but when she marries, when her husband receives promotion or otherwise distinguishes himself, and on many other occasions.

The ceremony takes place in the moring. Arrived at the gates of Buckingham Palace, the presenter and presentee in their carriage must wait in a long line to be admired or criticised by newsboys and others, according to their temperament.

Magnificent Life Guards, with white plumed helmets and dazzling cuirasses, and mounted on black chargers, are stationed outside the gates, but they do not alarm the boys. A military band plays, too, and this, of course, pleases the boys.

High officials, members of the Diplomatic Corps and a few other privileged persons are admitted to the palace at once, but the others must wait.

Having shown passes to the police at the gates, they drive through the courtyard to the palace door, where they alight and produce more cards. Here there is usually a body of the picturesque Yeomen of the Guard, or Beefeaters, old soldiers dressed in the fashion of the reign of Henry VII.

After much more waiting and crushing with other gorgeously dressed persons, the debutante reaches the throne-room. As she enters she must relinquish the train which she has carried snugly on her arm, and swing it behind her. She must keep a stout heart and a clear head. She curtseys almost to the ground as she looks toward the royal person and then the Lord Chamberlain's subordinate calls the name of the person presenting and the one presented. They advance toward the throne, the elder woman curtseys and kisses the extended hand of the Queen or her representative, and the debutante follows her example. They back away till they reach the door, and curtesy again. It is all over.

As they go they catch a glimpse of a group of princes and princesses about the throne, of diplomats and officials in uniform a little further away, and of numbers of the Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms in their grand uniform. Among these privileged persons the United States Ambassador is made conspicuous by the simple dignity of his plain American clothes.

At the late drawing room the Princess of Wales and all the royal family were in mourning. The Princess and her daughters wore black trains trimmed with jet and chiffon. The Duchess of York wore black moire.

Miss Curtis's Gorgeous Train.

Mrs. Bayard's Gown.

Miss Clara Curtis's Costume.

A TRANSVAAL PENNY.

This Little Coin of the Brave Boers Bears the Features of Their Beloved Oom Paul.

A penny of the Transvaal Republic is well worth the study of people other than numismatists for more reasons than one. It possesses one remarkable peculiarity over all other coins of republics in that the head of its President appears upon its face, as is the custom of monarchies the world over.

President Krueger has not an imperial countenance, but rather that of a shrewd man of affairs. It is not the character of the head, however, that is of importance, but the fact of its being there.

In the Greek cities, it is interesting to note that even when liberty had become a mere name this symbol of personal rule was still absent. The Dionysii, father and son, were as absolute in Syracuse as was the great King in Sasa, but they did not venture to put their heads on Syracusan coins. Around the medallion of President Kreuger's head is the inscription, "Zuid Afrik. Republiek."

On the other side of the coin, in the centre, is a lion, standing presumably for African savagery, which the Boer at his right has vanquished, while below is shown his primitive "trek wagon." In the exact centre of the design is an anchor, while in the circle about the edge, in English, are the words "1 Penny," and the date.

IS KISSING A CRIME?

The British Authorities Think So.

PUNISHMENT OF A GENERAL.

In Royal Circles the Practice of Saluting the Hand Is Dying Out.

The Secretary of State for India has just issued a solemn order in council dismissing from the service of the Anglo-Indian Government one of the principal medical authorities at Madras, a military surgeon named Clarence Smith, enjoying the equivalent rank to that of brigadier-general, for merely having requested a kiss.

The Surgeon-General was a married man, possessed of encumbrances in the shape of grown-up children, and the lady to whom he offered this salute had a husband. She might not have said anything about it had the Surgeon-General been sober, but when he made the offer he had been dining not wisely, but too well, and instead of breathing love he breathed the odor of brandies and sodas..

Even ladies in the East are averse to taking alcoholic stimulants in this particular form, and, accordingly, the offended female turned the medical General out of her house and intimated to him that she should inform her husband. The following morning the offender realized he had made a fool of himself,and wrote a letter of abject apology to the lady, attributing his behavior to intoxication. But there was no forgiveness in her, and so a few days later her husband sent a detailed report of the General's action to headquarters at Calcutta, along with the letter of apology.

All this took place about a year ago, and ever since then the British authorities have had their hands full of correspondence, discussion and reports about the matter. The aggrieved husband demanded that the offender be fittingly punished, and after due consideration the Viceroy, Lord Elgin, who, as a Scot, is naturally devoid of any sense of humor, ordered the dismissal from the service of the all too gallant General. The latter appealed against the decision, pleading in extenuation of his temerity that the lady had frequently permitted him to kiss her hand, arguing that this justified further advances.

The lady protested, however, that she had resisted and resented even the first approach toward what diplomatists describe as an "understanding," and the authorities appear to have accepted her statement and have confirmed the dismissal of the General, after a service covering a quarter of a century, nominally on the ground of offering to kiss a married lady, but in reality because a man who could be such a fool as to risk his position to embrace an elderly and unattractive woman was obviously too foolish to be entrusted with any responsible office in the service of Her Britannic Majesty.

It is unfortunate for the Surgeon-General Clarence Smith that he is not in the service of the Queen of the Netherlands. For the Dutch Courts of Appeal have recently decided that a man who kisses a lady, who is a total stranger to him, in the public street cannot be legally punished for the offence: "To kiss a person," remarked the President of the Supreme Court, "cannot be a misdemeanor, as it is in the nature of a warm mark of sympathy." Indeed, the Dutch Judges seem to consider it as a permissible and praiseworthy way of showing admiration for personal charms.

It is interesting to note that the case which led to this remarkable statement on the part of the Dutch Court of Appeals was decided in the first instance by the lower courts against the kisser, who was fined a florin for his temerity. This judgment, however, was reversed by the higher courts, which are, it appears, of the opinion that the privilege of kissing a Dutch vrow is not worth even the trifling sum of forty cents.

Kisses are great factors in State ceremonies and their number is prescribed by etiquette in the most strict fashion. Thus sovereigns kiss one another on the cheek, regardless of individual sentiment, while to their subjects and inferiors in general they extend the hand to be kissed. This practice of kissing the hand is but a compromise of the ancient active homage manifested by kissing the foot, which was insisted upon by the Roman Caesars, by the early Christian monarchs and to this day by the Pope of Rome. In England the Cabinet Ministers—the Ambassadors as well as the great dignitaries of the realm—kiss the Queen's hand on appointment to office and when Her Majesty holds a drawing room she extends her hand, figuratively speaking, to be kissed, but in reality to be bowed over by those presented to her. The very moment she retires from the throne room and her place is taken by one of her daughters-in-law or by one of her daughters, even the very pretence of kissing ceases.

At several of the courts of Continental Europe the reigning sovereign's hand is invariably kissed by his subjects when it is extended. At the Court of Belgium the obeisance involved by the kissing of hands is paid only to the ladies of the royal family. In Denmark, where Queen Louise, who is one of the greatest sticklers on the score of etiquette, has introduced all the formalities and ceremony of the petty German court at which she was brought up, the dignitaries of the royal household and the persons connected with the court in same cases endeavor to curry royal favor by kissing the hand of King Christian, but the practice is far from being general at Copenhagen.

In Russia the Czar's hand is kissed in the most servile manner, whenever he offers it, and when he dies his corpse has to be kissed in accordance with the rules of etiquette by all the great officers of the realm and members of the household. In Italy King Humbert discourages the kissing of his hand, and may often be seen giving a hearty handshake to some laboring man, farmer, or indeed any one of the humbler classes of his subjects, among whom he is especially popular. Queen Margaret's hand, as well as those of the princesses of the royal house of Savoy, is kissed, of course, by the Italians, men and women, and the same is the case in Spain.

It is in the petty German courts that the hand-kissing etiquette remains in full force, like so many other of those practices of bygone times, when the gulf between royalty and the people was far less shallow than it is now. In Germany Austria the custom still prevails among upper classes of society of the men ing the hands of the ladies, although practice has been abandoned in Scandinavia, Spain, etc., as well France, except among certain of t bers of the ancient regime of the St. Germain at Paris.

PIGMY AND GIANTS AT WAR

A Store Within a Store, and Both Bitter Rivals.

TWO WOMEN OWN THE SMALL ONE.

They Defy Their Big Competitor and Laugh to Scorn All Offers for Their Lease.

A store almost within a store is the curious sight which greets the Twenty-third street shoppers as they pass along the block between Fifth and Sixth avenues.

There is a little bit of mystery about it that intensifies their interest. The little store is like a pigmy compared to the mammoth establishment that is above, below, at the back and sides of it. The petite one seems to be in one of the giant show windows. There have been cases where big stores acquiring a new site have wiped out all except one of a row of small stores, the owner of which—or rather, the landlord—holding out for a big price, which the big store, refusing to be made a victim of circumstances, has ignored, going ahead and building a towering structure around the obdurate leaseholder. But never before has there been a store within a store, both selling the same line of goods. While a fierce competition exists, strange to say, they stand to one another in relation of landlord and tenant. When McCreery & Co. built the structure on Twenty-third street they had no intention of occupying it for themselves. They let it out into several parts. Later they decided to establish themselves on Twenty-third street, in competition with the other large dry goods houses already there. Then they set to work to induce their tenants to vacate the small stores that line the front of the big building. Most of the stores had not prospered and the owners were glad enough to sell their leases, but one tenant—a French woman named Freud—declined to be bought out.

Mme. Freud had a small and prosperous business. She made a specialty of corsets. One glance at the show window revealed that fact, as it is filled with numerous wax figures wearing stays of various hues. McCreery & Co. offered every inducement to their tenant to sell, but in vain. Mme. Freud has a partner—Mme. Kerney—and the two determined to run their store right in the teeth of the larger concern. The proprietors of the latter had all the other small store windows ripped out and immense ones put in. Tightly wedged between two of the largest is the odd little store. They have offered her $15,000 for her lease, which runs for several years yet. That is the top notch in the scale of prices rejected by the French woman.

It is pleasant to relate that the big store does not appear to have suffered greatly from the presence of the little one. Nor, on the other hand, has the stream of custom been turned away from the small store by the presence of the two large entrances on either side. Mme. Freud's corset place has a bare frontage of twelve feet, nearly in the centre of the eighty feet occupied by the large establishment. A dozen feet back from the door the store widens to eighteen feet, and so continues to the rear, which is ninety feet from the building line. In this comparatively small space the corset maker displays her wares and entertains her customers. All around, though separated by stout walls, the larger store does business.

"They just did not offer quite as much s we thought we ought to get," said Mme. ud, "and so, of course, we intend to in here until our lease runs out, three from next May. I am afraid Mr. ery's frontage is not as handsome as be if he had the whole to himhat cannot be helped."